

1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to an elder-focused dispute resolution  
3           process; creating s. 44.407, F.S.; providing  
4           legislative findings; defining terms; authorizing the  
5           courts to appoint an eldercaring coordinator and refer  
6           certain parties and elders to eldercaring  
7           coordination; prohibiting the courts from referring  
8           certain parties to eldercaring coordination without  
9           the consent of the elder and other parties to the  
10          action; specifying the duration of eldercaring  
11          coordinator appointments; requiring the courts to  
12          conduct intermittent review hearings regarding the  
13          conclusion or extension of such appointments;  
14          specifying mechanisms by which a court appointment is  
15          terminated or extended; providing qualifications and  
16          disqualifications for eldercaring coordinators;  
17          requiring prospective eldercaring coordinators to meet  
18          certain qualifications for background screening,  
19          unless otherwise exempt; requiring prospective  
20          eldercaring coordinators to submit fingerprints for  
21          purposes of criminal history background screening;  
22          requiring prospective eldercaring coordinators to pay  
23          the fees for state and federal fingerprint processing;  
24          providing for the disqualification and removal of  
25          certain eldercaring coordinators; requiring that

26 notice of hearing on removal of an eldercaring  
27 coordinator be timely served; authorizing the courts  
28 to award reasonable attorney fees and costs under  
29 certain circumstances; requiring the court to appoint  
30 successor eldercaring coordinators under certain  
31 circumstances; specifying the courts' authority to  
32 make certain determinations based on the parties'  
33 ability to pay the eldercaring coordination fees and  
34 costs; providing that certain communications between  
35 the parties, participants, and eldercaring  
36 coordinators are confidential; providing exceptions;  
37 providing requirements for emergency reporting to  
38 courts under certain circumstances; providing immunity  
39 from liability for eldercaring coordinators under  
40 specified circumstances; requiring the Florida Supreme  
41 Court to establish certain minimum standards and  
42 procedures for eldercaring coordinators; authorizing  
43 the Florida Supreme Court to appoint or employ  
44 personnel for specified purposes; providing an  
45 effective date.

46  
47 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

48  
49 Section 1. Section 44.407, Florida Statutes, is created to  
50 read:

51 44.407 Elder-focused dispute resolution process.—

52 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—The Legislature finds that:

53 (a) Denying an elder a voice in decisions regarding  
54 himself or herself may negatively affect the elder's health and  
55 well-being, as well as deprive the elder of his or her legal  
56 rights. Even if an elder is losing capacity to make major  
57 decisions for himself or herself, the elder is still entitled to  
58 the dignity of having his or her voice heard.

59 (b) In conjunction with proceedings in court, it is in the  
60 best interest of an elder, his or her family members, and  
61 legally recognized decisionmakers to have access to a  
62 nonadversarial process to resolve disputes relating to the elder  
63 which focuses on the elder's wants, needs, and best interests.  
64 Such a process will protect and preserve the elder's exercisable  
65 rights.

66 (c) By recognizing that every elder, including those whose  
67 capacity is being questioned, has unique needs, interests, and  
68 differing abilities, the Legislature intends for this section to  
69 promote the public welfare by establishing a unique dispute  
70 resolution option to complement and enhance, not replace, other  
71 services, such as the provision of legal information or legal  
72 representation; financial advice; individual or family therapy;  
73 medical, psychological, or psychiatric evaluation; or mediation,  
74 specifically for issues related to the care and needs of elders.  
75 The Legislature intends that this section be liberally construed

76 | to accomplish these goals.

77 | (2) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

78 | (a) "Action," for purposes of using eldercaring  
 79 | coordination solely to address disputes regarding the care and  
 80 | safety of the elder, means a proceeding in which a party sought  
 81 | or seeks a judgment or order from the court to:

82 | 1. Determine if someone is or is not incapacitated  
 83 | pursuant to s. 744.331.

84 | 2. Appoint or remove a guardian or guardian advocate.

85 | 3. Review any actions of a guardian.

86 | 4. Execute an investigation pursuant to s. 415.104.

87 | 5. Review an agent's actions pursuant to s. 709.2116.

88 | 6. Review a proxy's decision pursuant to s. 765.105.

89 | 7. Enter an injunction for the protection of an elder  
 90 | under s. 825.1035.

91 | 8. Follow up on a complaint made to the Office of Public  
 92 | and Professional Guardians pursuant to s. 744.2004.

93 | 9. At the discretion of the presiding judge, address any  
 94 | other matters pending before the court which involve the care  
 95 | and safety of an elder.

96 |   
 97 | The term does not include any action brought under chapters 732,  
 98 | 733, and 736.

99 | (b) "Care and safety" means the condition of the elder's  
 100 | general physical, mental, emotional, psychological, and social

101 well-being. The term does not include a determination of  
102 capacity by the court under s. 744.331(5) and (6). Unless the  
103 parties agree otherwise, the term does not include matters  
104 relating to the elder's estate planning, the elder's agent  
105 designations under chapter 709, the elder's surrogate  
106 designations under chapter 765, trusts in which the elder is a  
107 grantor, fiduciary, or beneficiary, or other similar financially  
108 focused matters.

109 (c) "Elder" means a person 60 years of age or older who is  
110 alleged to be suffering from the infirmities of aging as  
111 manifested by a physical, a mental, or an emotional dysfunction  
112 to the extent that the elder's ability to provide adequately for  
113 the protection or care of his or her own person or property is  
114 impaired.

115 (d) "Eldercaring coordination" means an elder-focused  
116 dispute resolution process during which an eldercaring  
117 coordinator assists an elder, legally authorized decisionmakers,  
118 and others who participate by court order or by invitation of  
119 the eldercaring coordinator in resolving disputes regarding the  
120 care and safety of an elder by:

- 121 1. Facilitating more effective communication and  
122 negotiation and the development of problem-solving skills.
- 123 2. Providing education about eldercare resources.
- 124 3. Facilitating the creation, modification, or  
125 implementation of an eldercaring plan and reassessing it as

126 necessary to reach a resolution of ongoing disputes concerning  
127 the care and safety of the elder.

128 4. Making recommendations for the resolution of disputes  
129 concerning the care and safety of the elder.

130 5. With the prior approval of the parties to an action or  
131 of the court, making limited decisions within the scope of the  
132 court's order of referral.

133 (e) "Eldercaring coordination communication" means an oral  
134 or written statement, or nonverbal conduct intended to make an  
135 assertion, by, between, or among the parties, participants, or  
136 eldercaring coordinator made during the course of eldercaring  
137 coordination activity, or before an eldercaring coordination  
138 activity if made in furtherance of eldercaring coordination. The  
139 term does not include statements made during eldercaring  
140 coordination which involve the commission of a crime, the intent  
141 to commit a crime, or ongoing abuse, exploitation, or neglect of  
142 a child or vulnerable adult.

143 (f) "Eldercaring coordinator" means an impartial third  
144 person who is appointed by the court or designated by the  
145 parties and who meets the requirements of subsection (5). The  
146 role of the eldercaring coordinator is to assist parties through  
147 eldercaring coordination in a manner that respects the elder's  
148 need for autonomy and safety.

149 (g) "Eldercaring plan" means a continually reassessed plan  
150 for the items, tasks, or responsibilities needed to provide for

151 the care and safety of an elder which is modified throughout  
152 eldercaring coordination to meet the changing needs of the elder  
153 and which takes into consideration the preferences and wishes of  
154 the elder. The plan is not a legally enforceable document, but  
155 is meant for use by the parties and participants.

156 (h) "Good cause" means a finding that the eldercaring  
157 coordinator:

158 1. Is not fulfilling the duties and obligations of the  
159 position;

160 2. Has failed to comply with any order of the court,  
161 unless the order has been superseded on appeal;

162 3. Has conflicting or adverse interests that affect his or  
163 her impartiality;

164 4. Has engaged in circumstances that compromise the  
165 integrity of eldercaring coordination; or

166 5. Has had a disqualifying event occur.

167  
168 The term does not include a party's disagreement with the  
169 eldercaring coordinator's methods or procedures.

170 (i) "Legally authorized decisionmaker" means an individual  
171 designated, either by the elder or by the court, pursuant to  
172 chapter 709, chapter 744, chapter 747, or chapter 765 who has  
173 the authority to make specific decisions on behalf of the elder  
174 who is the subject of an action.

175 (j) "Participant" means an individual who is not a party

176 who joins eldercaring coordination by invitation of or with the  
177 consent of the eldercaring coordinator but who has not filed a  
178 pleading in the action from which the case was referred to  
179 eldercaring coordination.

180 (k) "Party" includes the elder who is the subject of an  
181 action and any other individual over whom the court has  
182 jurisdiction in the current case.

183 (3) REFERRAL.—

184 (a) Upon agreement of the parties to the action, the  
185 court's own motion, or the motion of a party to the action, the  
186 court may appoint an eldercaring coordinator and refer the  
187 parties to eldercaring coordination to assist in the resolution  
188 of disputes concerning the care and safety of the elder who is  
189 the subject of an action.

190 (b) The court may not refer a party who has a history of  
191 domestic violence or exploitation of an elderly person to  
192 eldercaring coordination unless the elder and other parties in  
193 the action consent to such referral.

194 1. The court shall offer each party an opportunity to  
195 consult with an attorney or a domestic violence advocate before  
196 accepting consent to such referral. The court shall determine  
197 whether each party has given his or her consent freely and  
198 voluntarily.

199 2. The court shall consider whether a party has committed  
200 an act of exploitation as defined in s. 415.102, exploitation of



201 an elderly person or disabled adult as defined in s. 825.103(1),  
202 or domestic violence as defined in s. 741.28 against another  
203 party or any member of another party's family; engaged in a  
204 pattern of behaviors that exert power and control over another  
205 party and that may compromise another party's ability to  
206 negotiate a fair result; or engaged in behavior that leads  
207 another party to have reasonable cause to believe that he or she  
208 is in imminent danger of becoming a victim of domestic violence.  
209 The court shall consider and evaluate all relevant factors,  
210 including, but not limited to, the factors specified in s.  
211 741.30(6)(b).

212 3. If a party has a history of domestic violence or  
213 exploitation of an elderly person, the court must order  
214 safeguards to protect the safety of the participants and the  
215 elder and the elder's property, including, but not limited to,  
216 adherence to all provisions of an injunction for protection or  
217 conditions of bail, probation, or a sentence arising from  
218 criminal proceedings.

219 (4) COURT APPOINTMENT.—

220 (a) A court appointment of an eldercaring coordinator is  
221 for a term of up to 2 years and the court shall conduct review  
222 hearings intermittently to determine whether the term should be  
223 concluded or extended. Appointments conclude upon expiration of  
224 the term or upon discharge by the court, whichever occurs  
225 earlier.

226        (b) The order of appointment by the court shall define the  
 227 scope of the eldercaring coordinator's authority under the  
 228 appointment in the action, consistent with this section.

229        (c) The order shall specify that, notwithstanding the  
 230 intermittent review hearings under paragraph (a), a party may  
 231 move the court at any time during the period of appointment for  
 232 termination of the appointment. Upon the filing of such a  
 233 motion, the court shall timely conduct a hearing to determine  
 234 whether to terminate the appointment. Until the court has ruled  
 235 on the motion, the eldercaring coordination process shall  
 236 continue. In making the determination, the court shall consider  
 237 at a minimum:

238        1. The efforts and progress of eldercaring coordination in  
 239 the action to date;

240        2. The preference of the elder, if ascertainable; and

241        3. Whether continuation of the appointment is in the best  
 242 interest of the elder.

243        (5) QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELDERCARING COORDINATORS.—

244        (a) The court shall appoint qualified eldercaring  
 245 coordinators who:

246        1. Meet one of the following professional requirements:

247        a. Are licensed as a mental health professional under  
 248 chapter 491 and hold at least a master's degree in the  
 249 professional field of practice;

250        b. Are licensed as a psychologist under chapter 490;

251 c. Are licensed as a physician under chapter 458 or  
252 chapter 459;  
253 d. Are licensed as a nurse under chapter 464 and hold at  
254 least a master's degree;  
255 e. Are certified by the Florida Supreme Court as a family  
256 mediator and hold at least a master's degree;  
257 f. Are a member in good standing of The Florida Bar; or  
258 g. Are a professional guardian as defined in s.  
259 744.102(17) and hold at least a master's degree.  
260 2. Have completed all of the following:  
261 a. Three years of post-licensure or post-certification  
262 practice;  
263 b. A family mediation training program certified by the  
264 Florida Supreme Court; and  
265 c. An eldercaring coordinator training program certified  
266 by the Florida Supreme Court. The training must total at least  
267 44 hours and must include advanced tactics for dispute  
268 resolution of issues related to aging, illness, incapacity, or  
269 other vulnerabilities associated with elders, as well as elder,  
270 guardianship, and incapacity law and procedures and less  
271 restrictive alternatives to guardianship; phases of eldercaring  
272 coordination and the role and functions of an eldercaring  
273 coordinator; the elder's role within eldercaring coordination;  
274 family dynamics related to eldercaring coordination; eldercaring  
275 coordination skills and techniques; multicultural competence and

276 its use in eldercaring coordination; at least 6 hours of the  
277 implications of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation and other  
278 safety issues pertinent to the training; at least 4 hours of  
279 ethical considerations pertaining to the training; use of  
280 technology within eldercaring coordination; and court-specific  
281 eldercaring coordination procedures.

282 3. Have successfully passed a Level 2 background screening  
283 as provided in s. 435.04(2) and (3) or are exempt from  
284 disqualification under s. 435.07. The prospective eldercaring  
285 coordinator must submit a full set of fingerprints to the court  
286 or to a vendor, entity, or agency authorized by s. 943.053(13).  
287 The court, vendor, entity, or agency shall forward the  
288 fingerprints to the Department of Law Enforcement for state  
289 processing and the Department of Law Enforcement shall forward  
290 the fingerprints to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for  
291 national processing. The prospective eldercaring coordinator  
292 shall pay the fees for state and federal fingerprint processing.  
293 The state cost for fingerprint processing shall be as provided  
294 in s. 943.053(3)(e) for records provided to persons or entities  
295 other than those specified as exceptions therein.

296 4. Have not been a respondent in a final order granting an  
297 injunction for protection against domestic, dating, sexual, or  
298 repeat violence or stalking or exploitation of an elder or a  
299 disabled person.

300 5. Have met any additional qualifications the court may

301 require to address issues specific to the parties.

302 (b) A qualified eldercaring coordinator must be in good  
303 standing or in clear and active status with all professional  
304 licensing authorities or certification boards to which the  
305 eldercaring coordinator is subject.

306 (6) DISQUALIFICATIONS AND REMOVAL OF ELDERCARING  
307 COORDINATORS.—

308 (a) An eldercaring coordinator must resign and immediately  
309 report to the court if he or she no longer meets the minimum  
310 qualifications or if any of the disqualifying circumstances  
311 occurs.

312 (b) The court shall remove an eldercaring coordinator upon  
313 the eldercaring coordinator's resignation or disqualification or  
314 upon a finding of good cause shown based on the court's own  
315 motion or a party's motion.

316 (c) Upon the court's own motion or upon a party's motion,  
317 the court may suspend the authority of an eldercaring  
318 coordinator pending a hearing on the motion for removal. Notice  
319 of hearing on removal must be timely served on the eldercaring  
320 coordinator and all parties.

321 (d) If a motion was made in bad faith, a court may, in  
322 addition to any other remedy authorized by law, award reasonable  
323 attorney fees and costs to a party or an eldercaring coordinator  
324 who successfully challenges a motion for removal.

325 (7) SUCCESSOR ELDERCARING COORDINATORS.—If an eldercaring

326 coordinator resigns, is removed, or is suspended from an  
327 appointment, the court shall appoint a successor qualified  
328 eldercaring coordinator who is agreed to by all parties or, if  
329 the parties do not reach agreement on a successor, another  
330 qualified eldercaring coordinator to serve for the remainder of  
331 the original term.

332 (8) FEES AND COSTS.-The eldercaring coordinator's fees  
333 shall be paid in equal portions by each party referred to the  
334 eldercaring coordination process by the court. The order of  
335 referral shall specify which parties are ordered to the process  
336 and the percentage of the eldercaring coordinator's fees that  
337 each shall pay. The court may determine the allocation among the  
338 parties of fees and costs for eldercaring coordination and may  
339 make an unequal allocation based on the financial circumstances  
340 of each party, including the elder.

341 (a) A party who is asserting that he or she is unable to  
342 pay the eldercaring coordination fees and costs must complete a  
343 financial affidavit form approved by the presiding court. The  
344 court shall consider the party's financial circumstances,  
345 including income; assets; liabilities; financial obligations;  
346 and resources, including, but not limited to, whether the party  
347 can receive or is receiving trust benefits, whether the party is  
348 represented by and paying a lawyer, and whether paying the fees  
349 and costs of eldercaring coordination would create a substantial  
350 hardship.

351 (b) If a court finds that a party is indigent based upon  
352 the criteria prescribed in s. 57.082, the court may not order  
353 the party to eldercaring coordination unless funds are available  
354 to pay the indigent party's allocated portion of the eldercaring  
355 coordination fees and costs, which may include funds provided  
356 for that purpose by one or more nonindigent parties who consent  
357 to paying such fees and costs, or unless insurance coverage or  
358 reduced or pro bono services are available to pay all or a  
359 portion of such fees and costs. If financial assistance, such as  
360 health insurance or eldercaring coordination grants, is  
361 available, such assistance must be taken into consideration by  
362 the court in determining the financial abilities of the parties.

363 (9) CONFIDENTIALITY; PRIVILEGE; EXCEPTIONS.-

364 (a) Except as provided in this subsection, all eldercaring  
365 coordination communications are confidential. An eldercaring  
366 coordination party, participant, or eldercaring coordinator may  
367 not disclose an eldercaring coordination communication to a  
368 person other than another eldercaring coordination party,  
369 participant, or eldercaring coordinator, or a party's or  
370 participant's counsel. A violation of this subsection may be  
371 remedied as provided in paragraph (g). If the eldercaring  
372 coordination is court ordered, a violation of this subsection  
373 may also subject the eldercaring coordination participant to  
374 sanctions by the court, including, but not limited to, costs,  
375 attorney fees and costs, and eldercaring coordinator's fees and

376 costs.

377 (b) An eldercaring coordination party, participant, or  
378 eldercaring coordinator has a privilege to refuse to testify and  
379 to prevent any other person from testifying in a subsequent  
380 proceeding regarding eldercaring coordination communications.

381 (c) Notwithstanding paragraphs (a) and (b), there is no  
382 confidentiality or privilege attached to any signed written  
383 agreement reached during eldercaring coordination, unless the  
384 parties agree otherwise, or to any eldercaring coordination  
385 communication:

386 1. Necessary to identify, authenticate, confirm, or deny a  
387 written and signed agreement entered into by the parties during  
388 eldercaring coordination.

389 2. Necessary to identify an issue for resolution by the  
390 court, including to support a motion to terminate eldercaring  
391 coordination, without otherwise disclosing communications made  
392 by any party, participant, or the eldercaring coordinator.

393 3. Limited to the subject of a party's compliance with the  
394 order of referral to eldercaring coordination, orders for  
395 psychological evaluation, court orders or health care provider  
396 recommendations for counseling, or court orders for substance  
397 abuse testing or treatment.

398 4. Necessary to determine the qualifications of an  
399 eldercaring coordinator or to determine the immunity and  
400 liability of an eldercaring coordinator who has acted in bad



401 faith or with malicious purpose or in a manner exhibiting wanton  
402 and willful disregard for the rights, safety, or property of the  
403 parties pursuant to subsection (11).

404 5. The parties agree may be disclosed or for which  
405 privilege against disclosure has been waived by all parties.

406 6. Made in the event the eldercaring coordinator needs to  
407 contact persons outside of the eldercaring coordination process  
408 to give or obtain information that furthers the eldercaring  
409 coordination process.

410 7. That requires a mandatory report pursuant to chapter 39  
411 or chapter 415 solely for the purpose of making the mandatory  
412 report to the entity requiring the report.

413 8. Necessary to protect any person from future acts that  
414 would constitute domestic violence under chapter 741; child  
415 abuse, neglect, or abandonment under chapter 39; or abuse,  
416 neglect, or exploitation of an elderly or disabled adult under  
417 chapter 415 or chapter 825, or are necessary in an investigation  
418 conducted under s. 744.2004 or a review conducted under s  
419 744.368 (5).

420 9. Offered to report, prove, or disprove professional  
421 misconduct alleged to have occurred during eldercaring  
422 coordination, solely for the internal use of the body conducting  
423 the investigation of such misconduct.

424 10. Offered to report, prove, or disprove professional  
425 malpractice alleged to have occurred during eldercaring

426 coordination solely for the professional malpractice proceeding.

427 11. Willfully used to plan a crime, commit or attempt to  
428 commit a crime, conceal ongoing criminal activity, or threaten  
429 violence.

430 (d) An eldercaring coordination communication disclosed  
431 under any provision of subparagraph (c)1., subparagraph (c)2.,  
432 subparagraph (c)5., subparagraph (c)8., or subparagraph (c)9. is  
433 confidential and is not discoverable or admissible for any other  
434 purpose, unless otherwise permitted by this section.

435 (e) Information that is otherwise admissible or  
436 discoverable does not become inadmissible or protected from  
437 discovery by reason of its disclosure or use in eldercaring  
438 coordination.

439 (f) A party that discloses or makes a representation about  
440 a privileged eldercaring coordination communication waives that  
441 privilege, but only to the extent necessary for the other party  
442 or parties to respond to the disclosure or representation.

443 (g)1. An eldercaring coordination party or participant who  
444 knowingly and willfully discloses an eldercaring coordination  
445 communication in violation of this subsection, upon application  
446 by any party to a court of competent jurisdiction, is subject to  
447 remedies, including:

448 a. Equitable relief.

449 b. Compensatory damages.

450 c. Contribution to the other party's or parties' attorney

451 fees and costs, the other party's or parties' portion of the  
452 eldercaring coordinator fees, and the other party's portion of  
453 the costs incurred in the eldercaring coordination process.

454 d. Reasonable attorney fees and costs incurred in the  
455 application for remedies under this subsection.

456 2. Notwithstanding any other law, an application for  
457 relief filed under this paragraph may not be commenced later  
458 than 2 years after the date on which the party had a reasonable  
459 opportunity to discover the breach of confidentiality, but in no  
460 case more than 4 years after the breach.

461 3. An eldercaring coordination party or participant is not  
462 subject to a civil action under this paragraph for lawful  
463 compliance with s. 119.07.

464 (10) EMERGENCY REPORTING TO THE COURT.—

465 (a) An eldercaring coordinator must immediately inform the  
466 court by affidavit or verified report, without notice to the  
467 parties, if:

468 1. The eldercaring coordinator has made or will make a  
469 report pursuant to chapter 39 or chapter 415; or

470 2. A party, including someone acting on a party's behalf,  
471 is threatening or is believed to be planning to commit the  
472 offense of kidnapping, as defined in s. 787.01(1), upon an  
473 elder, or wrongfully removes or is removing the elder from the  
474 jurisdiction of the court without prior court approval or  
475 compliance with the requirements of s. 744.1098. If the

476 eldercaring coordinator suspects that a party or family member  
477 has relocated an elder within this state to protect the elder  
478 from a domestic violence situation, the eldercaring coordinator  
479 may not disclose the location of the elder unless required by  
480 court order.

481 (b) An eldercaring coordinator shall immediately inform  
482 the court by affidavit or verified report and serve a copy of  
483 such affidavit or report on each party upon learning that a  
484 party is the subject of a final order or injunction of  
485 protection against domestic violence or exploitation of an  
486 elderly person or has been arrested for an act of domestic  
487 violence or exploitation of an elderly person.

488 (11) IMMUNITY FROM AND LIMITATION ON LIABILITY.—

489 (a) A person who is appointed or employed to assist the  
490 body designated to perform duties relating to disciplinary  
491 proceedings involving eldercaring coordinators has absolute  
492 immunity from liability arising from the performance of his or  
493 her duties while acting within the scope of his or her appointed  
494 functions or duties of employment.

495 (b) An eldercaring coordinator who is appointed by the  
496 court is not liable for civil damages for any act or omission  
497 within the scope of his or her duties under an order of referral  
498 unless such person acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose  
499 or in a manner exhibiting wanton and willful disregard for the  
500 rights, safety, or property of the parties.

501           (12) MINIMUM STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES.—The Florida Supreme  
502 Court shall establish minimum standards and procedures for the  
503 qualification, ethical conduct, discipline, and training and  
504 education of eldercaring coordinators who serve under this  
505 section. The Florida Supreme Court may appoint or employ such  
506 personnel as are necessary to assist the court in exercising its  
507 powers and performing its duties under this section.

508           Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.